

Now and then, we all need to be gently reminded, I think, of the importance of these very things, and I can think of no better time or place for that than March in Indiana.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let me thank my colleague from Indiana. You can't do better than "Hoosiers." It is one of my favorite movies. It is the story of a small Indiana town beating the big city players, and, if I am not mistaken, my former colleague in the House, Lee Hamilton, might have been one of those players on the big city team. I think he told me at one point. It is a great story and all eyes are on Indianapolis and Indiana now with the NCAA tournament and your neighbors to the west, Illinois, headed across the border. It is going to make a good showing, I hope, for the Fighting Illini.

Thank you very much for reminding us of that great American tradition.

#### SENATE FILIBUSTER RULE

Madam President, earlier in the day, my friend and colleague from Texas, Senator CORNYN, came to the floor and raised some questions about my commitment to the filibuster as a rule in the Senate. He quoted me several years ago as saying the filibuster is kind of an indication of what the Senate was all about, and I still stand by that.

The Senate, of course, with two Senators from each State, regardless of their population, is an opportunity for smaller States and minorities to be represented and to have a voice. And the filibuster, at least in some respects, was a procedural reflection of that same value.

But I would say to Senator CORNYN, I have been moved and changed my mind somewhat on filibuster because of nothing—nothing. That is what has been happening on the floor of the U.S. Senate, nothing. When Senator McCONNELL, as the Republican leader, was in charge of the Senate over the last 2 years, we did little or nothing.

I didn't run for this office to represent the people of Illinois and to help our Nation to watch the ink dry on documents that are being pushed back and forth on desks here. We came here to do something.

Two years ago, because of the filibuster, 2 years ago, we considered 22 amendments in the course of 1 year on the floor of the Senate. That is not counting vote-arama, that contraption of a procedure where we debate all of 2 minutes before we vote on something, but real debate and real amendments—22.

Well, the following year, 2020, dramatic increase. We went all the way up to 29 amendments in the course of a year.

You say: Well, give me some measurement in history. My wife said: What does that mean? In the first year of the Obama administration, we had 240 amendments in the first year. Now we are down to 22 and 29. Why? Because we reached a point now where everyone assumes that every issue is going to be filibustered, and therefore if you don't have 60 votes, forget it.

Well, it is rare that that kind of supermajority shows up on anything important.

That is what happens when you play out the filibuster tradition to an extreme. As one staffer said to me the other day, the Senate is in a death spiral. No one can bring anything to the floor that might be subject to a filibuster because you can't imagine where you are going to get 60 votes.

I hope he is wrong, but I can understand his analysis. The measures that we have considered so far this year in the U.S. Senate, after 2 months-plus—well, the impeachment trial—that didn't require any filibuster votes. The nominations that come before us every day are not subject to a filibuster. And, of course, there is the reconciliation bill—the American rescue program for President Biden—that was under a procedure where you couldn't use a filibuster.

So now things are quiet on the floor of the Senate again this week and next week because whatever you bring here is subject to a threat of a filibuster, and you need 60 votes. I have watched this play out on an issue near and dear to my heart. It is called the DREAM Act, which I introduced 20 years ago—20 years ago. It basically says that if you were brought to this country as an infant, toddler, or a child—your parents made the decision—you grow up here and you ought to have a fighting chance to earn your way to legal status and citizenship. That is it.

Overwhelming majorities of people in all political parties support it. They think it is a good idea. And you say: DURBIN, you came here to be a legislator, and, in 20 years, you can't pass one bill?

Well, I tried. Five times I brought the DREAM Act to the floor of the U.S. Senate, and it was stopped with a filibuster each and every time. I got a majority, and I still have a majority in support of it, but I can't get that 60 votes—that magic 60 votes that is needed under a filibuster.

Well, I am frustrated by that, and I hope my frustration is manifest by what I said on the floor. My challenge to the Members of the Senate on both sides of the aisle is very simply this: If you believe in the filibuster and if you believe in working, show me that you can pass an important bill subject to the filibuster. Do it next week or the week following. Bring something to the floor. Let's debate it, let's amend, and let's vote it. I don't think that is unreasonable to ask. In fact, I think that is the reason we were elected to come here.

So I would say to the defenders of the filibuster: Try to defend what has happened on the floor of the Senate the last 2 years—almost nothing. We can do better. The American people expect it of us.

#### GEORGIA SHOOTINGS

Madam President, last night, near Atlanta, GA, a gunman murdered eight people in what appears to be an act of

domestic terrorism. Six of the eight victims were women of Asian descent. We mourn the lives of those lost and pray for the families and loved ones.

While local and Federal authorities are still investigating the gunman's motives, we know that in the past year it has been a perilous time for Asian Americans and those from the Pacific Islands, especially women.

Since the pandemic began last March, nearly 3,800 hate incidents targeting these Americans have been reported. I expect the number of unreported incidents is much higher.

Asian-American women have had racist insults shouted at them from across streets. Grandparents have been assaulted and killed while running errands. Some Asian Americans have even begun carrying pepper spray, wearing body cameras, and walking in groups to protect themselves from wanton violence. Increasingly, AAPI Americans do not feel safe in their own neighborhoods.

This palpable fear is proof of how dangerous racist stereotypes and demagoguery can be. When former President Trump insists on calling the coronavirus the "China virus," as he did again last night on FOX News, he is not simply spouting hateful, childish rhetoric. He is granting people permission. Permission to target neighbors and fellow citizens. Permission to hate.

This kind of language divides and preys on fears. It offers the kind of answer to every problem that you might expect from these people. There is always somebody you could fear and someone you can hate. The sad reality is that racist fear-mongering has always been part of the American story.

Today, we know, by testimony from the FBI Director, that it is a growing danger to every American. Intelligence analysts warn us that White supremacists and other far-right extremists are the most significant domestic terrorism threat facing the United States. Of course, we look across the ocean to the threat of terrorism after 9/11. Sadly, now we have to look across the street.

For far too long the Federal Government has failed to adequately address this growing threat. We saw the lethal results of that inattention on January 6, right here in this Senate Chamber. Groups of far-right nationalists and neo-Nazis, provoked by former President Trump, stormed our Capitol in an attempted insurrection.

I have introduced a bipartisan bill in the Senate that would give law enforcement the resources to address this threat. It is called the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act. It would establish offices to combat domestic terrorism in the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security. Those offices would assess the domestic terrorism threat regularly so that law enforcement can focus their limited resources on the most significant threats, like those facing AAPI Americans today.